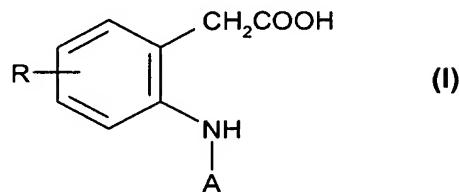


Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A compound of formula (I)



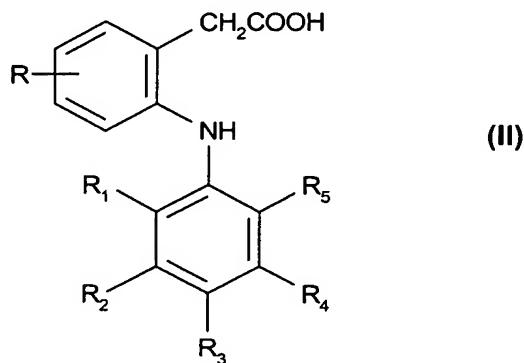
wherein

R is hydrogen, lower alkyl, (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl, hydroxy, halo, lower alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, trifluoromethyl or cyano; and

A is biaryl, optionally substituted β-naphthyl, bicyclic heterocyclic aryl, (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl-monocyclic carbocyclic aryl, or bicyclic (C₅ or C₆)cycloalkane [[fused-]]monocyclic carbocyclic aryl; provided that when bicyclic heterocyclic aryl is optionally substituted quinolinyl, R is located at the 5-position and R does not represent hydrogen; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 2 (original): A compound according to claim 1, wherein A represents optionally substituted β-naphthyl, optionally substituted quinolinyl, optionally substituted isoquinolinyl, optionally substituted 5,6,7,8-tetrahydronaphthyl, optionally substituted indanyl, optionally substituted biphenyl, optionally substituted (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl-phenyl or optionally substituted monocyclic heteroaryl-phenyl; provided that when A is optionally substituted quinolinyl, R is located at the 5-position and R does not represent hydrogen.

Claim 3 (original): A compound according to claim 1 of formula (II)



wherein

R is hydrogen, (C₁-C₄)alkyl, (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl, halo, lower alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, cyano or trifluoromethyl;

R₁ is hydrogen, fluoro, chloro, (C₁ or C₂)alkyl or trifluoromethyl;

R₂ is hydrogen, fluoro, chloro, (C₁ or C₂)alkyl or trifluoromethyl;

R₃ is optionally substituted phenyl or (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl;

R₄ is hydrogen, halo, lower alkyl or trifluoromethyl; and

R₅ is halo, lower alkyl or trifluoromethyl;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 4 (original): A compound according to claim 3 of formula (II),

wherein

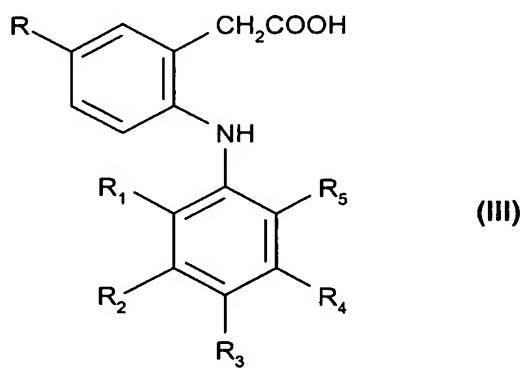
R is hydrogen, methyl, ethyl, propyl, methoxy, chloro, fluoro, cyclopropyl, cyano, trifluoromethoxy or trifluoromethyl;

R₁, R₂, R₄ and R₅ are, independently, hydrogen, fluoro or chloro; and

R₃ is (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl, phenyl, or phenyl mono- or poly-substituted independently by lower alkyl, fluoro, chloro, lower alkoxy or (C₁ or C₂)alkylenedioxy;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 5 (original): A compound according to claim 1 of formula (III)



wherein

R is hydrogen, (C₁-C₄)alkyl, (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl, halo, lower alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy or trifluoromethyl;

R₁ is hydrogen, chloro, fluoro or (C₁ or C₂)alkyl;

R₂ is hydrogen or fluoro;

R₃ is cyclopropyl, cyclohexyl, phenyl or phenyl substituted by chloro, fluoro, lower alkoxy, lower alkyl or lower alkylenedioxy;

R₄ is hydrogen, (C₁ or C₂)alkyl, trifluoromethyl or fluoro; and

R₅ is fluoro, chloro or (C₁ or C₂)alkyl;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 6 (original): A compound according to claim 5,
wherein

R is (C₁ or C₂)alkyl, cyclopropyl, chloro or fluoro;

R₁ is chloro or fluoro;

R₂ is hydrogen or fluoro;

R₃ is cyclopropyl;

R₄ is hydrogen, methyl or fluoro; and

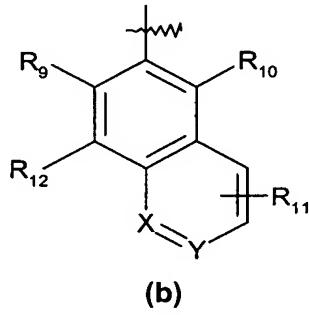
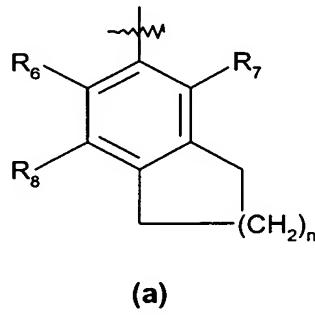
R₅ is fluoro;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 7 (original): A compound according to claim 1 of formula (I),
wherein

R is hydrogen, lower alkyl, (C₃-C₆)cycloalkyl, halo, lower alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, cyano or trifluoromethyl; and

A is selected from radicals (a) and (b)



wherein in radical (a)

n is 1 or 2; and

R₆-R₈ are independently hydrogen, lower alkyl or halo; and

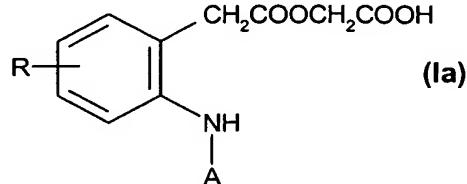
wherein in radical (b)

R₉-R₁₂ are independently hydrogen, lower alkyl or halo; and

X and Y are CH, or one of the X and Y is N and the other is CH; provided that when X is

N and Y is CH, R is located at the 5-position and R does not represent hydrogen;
or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; or a pharmaceutically acceptable ester thereof.

Claim 8 (original): A compound according to claim 1 of formula (Ia)



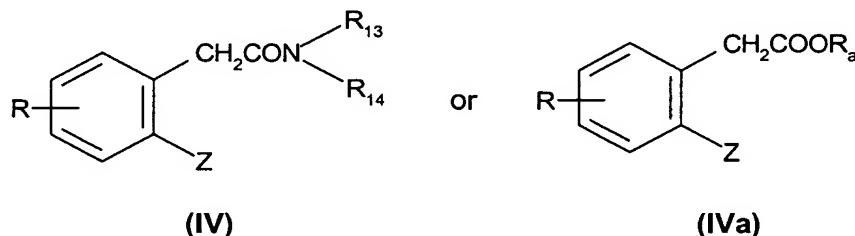
wherein R and A have meaning as defined in said claim; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 9 (original): A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 in combination with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers.

Claims 10-12 (cancelled)

Claim 13 (original): A method for the preparation of a compound of formula (I) of claim 1 which comprises:

a) coupling a compound of formula (IV) or (IVa)



wherein

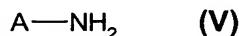
Z is iodo or bromo;

R has meaning as defined in claim 1;

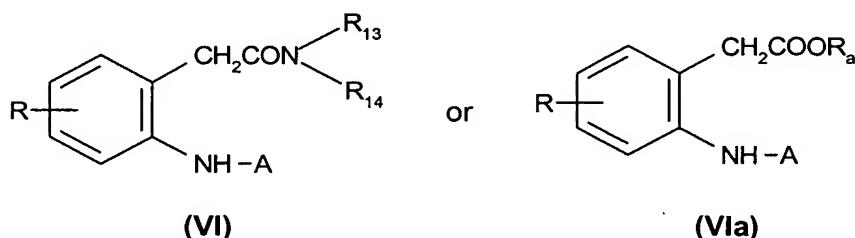
R_a is hydrogen, an alkali metal cation or lower alkyl, preferably isopropyl; and

R_{13} and R_{14} are lower alkyl; or R_{13} and R_{14} together with the nitrogen atom represent piperidino, pyrrolidino or morpholino;

with a compound of formula (V)

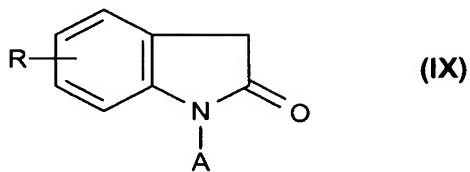


wherein A has meaning as defined in claim 1, in the presence of copper and cuprous iodide to obtain a compound of formula (VI) or (Vla)



and hydrolyzing the resulting compound of formula (VI) or (Vla) to a compound of formula (I);
or

(b) hydrolyzing a lactam of formula (IX)



wherein

R and A have meaning as defined in claim 1, with a strong base; and
in above processes, if desired, temporarily protecting any interfering reactive groups and
then isolating the resulting compound of the invention; and, if desired, converting
any resulting compound into another compound of the invention; and/or if desired
converting a free carboxylic acid of the invention into a pharmaceutically
acceptable ester derivative thereof; and/or if desired, converting a resulting free
acid into a salt or a resulting salt into the free acid or into another salt.